

Israeli joy over U.S.-PLO contacts may be shortlived

By Howard Goller
Reuter

TEL AVIV — Israel's joy over the suspension of U.S.-PLO contacts may soon turn to anxiety as Washington demands it make the next move towards peace.

President George Bush broke off the dialogue after 18 months Wednesday, then publicly challenged Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to show whether his new hardline government was serious about peace.

"I have sent a letter to Prime Minister Shamir. I have very specifically asked questions that relate to seriousness about the peace process," Bush told reporters.

Palestinian moderates voiced anger and experts predicted a rise in militancy on both sides as Israeli officials braced for an onslaught of new U.S. pressure. Israeli commentators said the tough U.S. action prompted by a guerrilla raid near the Tel Aviv coast last month cleared the way

for Washington to make demands no less harsh of Israel, despite their close alliance.

"After using an iron fist against the PLO, the Americans will feel themselves free — perhaps even forced — to use an iron fist against Israel," the country's biggest daily Yedioth Ahronoth wrote in an editorial.

Secretary of State James Baker

NEWS ANALYSIS

is pressing Israel to accept U.S. proposals for first-ever Israeli-Palestinian peace talks and Bush wants a halt to further Jewish settlement in occupied Arab lands.

Shamir pays lip service to his 13-month-old proposal to let Palestinians of the occupied territories elect negotiators to talks on interim self-rule. But he apparently feels no urgency to respond to U.S. proposals.

"Mr. Shamir is not a man to be

pressed and the Americans know it," his chief of staff Yossi Ahimeir told Reuters.

The Israeli premier is even less likely to respond since his Likud Party, emerging victorious from a power struggle with the more dovish Labour Party, formed the most right-wing government in Israeli history 10 days ago.

The hardline coalition is devoted to cracking down on the 30-month-old Palestinian uprising and increasing settlement of Jews in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Now Israeli leaders are working to shift the focus from the uprising to the larger conflict with Arab states, trying to claim talk of another Middle East war and making modest gestures to Palestinians in the territories.

They have reopened the first of the universities and colleges closed by the army because of unrest and agreed to receive a United Nations envoy investigating widely condemned tactics to quash the revolt.

But these are hardly enough for Palestinians, the United States and even some leaders of the influential American Jewish community who are echoing the views of a U.S. administration increasingly at odds with Israel.

Seymour Reich, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, met State Department officials Wednesday who told him the next move was up to Israel.

"I think they probably have a sense because they have done what Israel has asked them to do... that Israel will now take the initiative in some direction," said Reich, known to the Americans as a conduit to Shamir.

The United States has yet to use aid to Israel, biggest in the world at \$3 billion a year, as a lever against the Jewish state.

Officials believe Bush himself may be behind demands for aid cuts by Senator Robert Dole, Republican leader in the Senate, where the lobby for Israel has clout in U.S. policy-making.

U.S. warns Americans in Mideast

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States, reacting to hostile Arab statements following its decision to break off contacts with the PLO, has warned Americans abroad and especially in the Middle East to take extra security precautions.

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher, in a statement to be sent to U.S. embassies and missions worldwide, said Americans needed to be aware of rising tensions in the Middle East.

"The Department of State recommends that American citizens travelling abroad, and particularly in the Middle East, exercise extra caution," he said.

President George Bush Wednesday announced his decision to suspend diplomatic contacts with the Palestine Liberation Organisation until it condemned two attempted seaborne guerrilla raids on Israel and disciplined the perpetrators.

The PLO's representative in Washington, Hasan Abdul Rahman, said Thursday the PLO was still investigating the raids and could not say whether the orga-

nisation would issue a condemnation.

Abdul Rahman said the U.S. decision was surprising since Bush had seemed to have accepted the PLO's statement that it did not condone the attacks and was investigating them.

He said he believed the U.S. government buckled under pressure from Israel and the main pro-Israel lobby in Washington, the American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), as well as pro-Israeli congressmen.

"I believe that the real reason is not what President Bush declared, but the real reason is pressure of AIPAC and members of Congress who are here as apologists for Israel and not to promote the peace process," Abdul Rahman said.

The State Department issued a similar warning for Americans abroad on May 31, citing three specific threats to Americans by fundamentalist Shiite groups in the aftermath of the murder of seven Arabs by a deranged Israeli gunman on May 20.

"There have been a variety of statements... since that time and other information which we characterise as a rising level of tensions. It's I guess possible that there might be some reaction based on the president's decisions of yesterday," said Boucher.

Officials and analysts feared the decision would strengthen Arab militants and perhaps set off a new round of attacks against civilians in which U.S. citizens could be a prominent target.

One small Palestinian group, the Fateh Uprising, urged "Arab patriots" to threaten U.S. interests worldwide.

"America is biased towards the Zionist enemy (Israel) and should be punished for this," it said.

FLO leader Yasser Arafat's right-hand man, Salah Khalaf also known as Abu Iyad, told the Jordanian daily Al Ra'i he anticipated a wave of violence.

"We hold the United States responsible for the violence and extremism which will sweep the region as a result of this decision," he said.

Mengistu admits Ethiopia on verge of collapse

NAIROBI (R) — With rebel groups closing in, embattled Ethiopian President Mengistu Haile Mariam has admitted his country is one the verge of collapse.

Urging the people in an impassioned speech to parliament to rally and save the nation, Mengistu for the first time Thursday confirmed rebel reports of fierce fighting north of the capital Addis Ababa and the Red Sea province of Eritrea.

"Citizens must realise... that their motherland is on the verge of collapse in the face of various conspiracies," Addis Ababa Radio quoted him as saying.

Mengistu said the present fighting would decide whether Ethiopia survived as a united sovereign state.

Rebels linked to the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) say they have killed nearly 22,000 government troops in the past three weeks, while Eritrean independence guerrillas have virtually cut off Mengistu's Second Army of 120,000 men.

Military analysts in Addis Ababa say the army is isolated outside the Eritrean capital Asmara and constantly harassed by guerrillas. Its only link to the capital is by air.

A senior Western diplomat told a Reuters correspondent who visited Addis Ababa last week that the army was "encircled and must be thoroughly demoralised and defeated. Meanwhile, the rebels are gradually tightening the noose."

The Eritrean rebels, who in February captured the Red Sea port of Massawa, are now reported closing in on Asmara airport.

"If that goes, then it is as good as over," said the diplomat, adding that for the first time in 29 years of warfare the rebels would control the entire province.

In his speech, Mengistu said the government setbacks followed an agreement between the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and the TPLF to launch a joint offensive "to divide and disintegrate the country."



A group of disabled Afghan guerrillas wait for artificial limbs outside a hospital in Peshawar. Treatment is being furnished by international aid committees.

Aid groups pulling out of Afghanistan

PESHAWAR (AP) — Afghan fundamentalists who have turned their Islamic fervour on foreign relief agencies have forced at least one humanitarian aid group to close down a large-scale reconstruction programme in war-ravaged Afghanistan.

Attacks on Western aid groups during the past several months are also threatening an ambitious \$1.2-billion U.N. programme to reconstruct war-devastated Afghanistan, relief workers said Thursday.

"Maybe they don't want us here any more," said Salma Forman, a project officer of Achar, an organisation representing more than 50 aid groups, most of which are involved in rebuilding Afghanistan.

The Australian-based shelter Now International decided to shut down \$7 reconstruction projects inside Afghanistan after being attacked several times by Muslim fundamentalists shouting anti-West slogans.

"We are on the verge of pulling out all together," said Mike Heil, Shelter Now projects director.

However, Shelter Now will continue small-scale aid work in refugee camps around Peshawar until its Australian headquarters decides its fate.

Last week, two Afghan refugees opened fire on Shelter Now's director, Thor Armstrong, pumping 12 bullets into his vehicle. He received minor injuries. His young son, who was accompanying him home from a shopping trip in Peshawar, was unhurt.

Armstrong, who is American, left with his family Wednesday for the United States, where he will run the organisation's U.S. interests.

"It would have to change drastically inside Afghanistan for us to start up again," Heil said.

After Soviet troops ended nine years of direct intervention in Afghanistan in 1989, the United Nations launched an ambitious plan to rebuild the country.

The reconstruction programme was to pave the way for an estimated 5 million Afghan war refugees living in Iran and Pakistan to return to their homeland.

But few have returned and Muslim insurgents, who have waged their war against Kabul's Soviet-style government from Pakistan, have degenerated into feuding warlords.

Radical fundamentalists among the guerrilla resistance have turned their fury once reserved for the Soviet Union on Western

countries and foreign aid groups. "Even the United Nations is getting the heebie geebies (nervous)," said Forman. "Seven months ago, I wouldn't have thought anything of going inside Afghanistan but now I don't know whether it's worth the risk."

Western sources said 38 members of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's fundamentalist Hezb-E-Islami group were arrested after April's brutal attack on Shelter Now's facilities in the sprawling Nasir Bagh refugee camp.

A mob of 5,000, urged on by screaming Islamic clerics who charged Shelter Now workers with corrupting their women, ransacked offices, burned buildings and destroyed equipment and trucks. When the rampage was over the mob had caused more than \$1 million damage.

Shelter Now's construction factory in Afghanistan's eastern Nangarhar province was also destroyed by Afghan fundamentalists and a guard was seriously hurt.

Hans Kuitert, an Achar spokesman, said several aid groups are planning to move out of Peshawar and relocate their headquarters in Islamabad, the nation's capital.

"They will have only Afghan-manned field offices inside the camps and nearby," he said. "It started with women's programmes but that's just the peg they were using to get just the Western aid groups," Kuitert said.

Diplomatic sources say fundamentalists within the guerrilla leadership have launched an anti-West campaign to counter what they see as a U.S.-orchestrated attempt to put moderate resistance leaders into power.

Sadraddin Aga Khan, the U.N. coordinator behind the reconstruction project, has launched a fresh fundraising drive, but aid workers in Peshawar warn that there may be no aid groups left to do the United Nations' work.

Forman said the next six months will decide the future of international assistance to refugees. Aid organisations are deciding whether to continue assistance which this year was \$120 million.

"People are wondering: 'Do they even want us here?'" he said.

After Soviet soldiers withdrew, most aid organisations expected to be shifting their headquarters to Kabul anticipating an early end to Kabul's Communist-style government.

Peres, Rabin trade insults as leadership battle flares

TEL AVIV (AP) — The leadership battle in the left-of-centre Labour Party turned ugly Friday when rivals Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Rabin traded personal insults and blamed each other for leading the party into the political wilderness.

Rabin, who wants to oust Peres as party leader, called his rival "confused" and "unbalanced." Peres charged: "The one who made big mistakes is Rabin."

Peres, 66, and Rabin, 63, have been rivals for most of their political careers. They grew up in politics as proteges of Israel's feuding founders, with Peres following David Ben Gurion and Rabin taking Golda Meir as his mentor.

The latest dispute flared after Peres, with Rabin's backing, toppled Labour's coalition with the right-wing Likud Bloc, but then failed in April to form a new ruling coalition.

Peres' failure paved the way for Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to set up a right-wing government on June 11. Rabin, defence minister in the last cabinet, announced his bid for leadership the next day.

Until this week, Rabin and Peres refrained from personal attacks. But the atmosphere heated up Thursday when several Peres supporters announced a switch to Rabin, who according to recent surveys is Israel's most popular politician.

A survey published Friday in the Hadassot daily showed that 24.2 per cent of the respondents preferred Rabin as prime minister, compared to 20.4 per cent for Shamir and 11.2 per cent for Peres. In February, 15.3 per cent backed Rabin, 18.3 per cent favoured Shamir and 14.2 per cent supported Peres.

The surveys were conducted among 1,100 Jewish adults and have a margin of error of 2 per cent.

Appearing on the Thursday night news, Peres responded to Rabin's charges that he as party leader was solely responsible for the party's present troubles.

"Yitzhak Rabin went along with me on everything. Step after step... Was he being led? Was he tied to me by a chain? Couldn't he express his opinion?" Peres said. "Rabin bears greater responsibility than I do."

Peres also belittled Rabin's belief that the Likud could be prodded toward peace negotiations with Palestinians in Cairo. "He (Rabin) thought he could lead Shamir to Cairo. Instead, Shamir led him into a dead end street," Peres charged.

Rabin fired back in an interview on Israel Radio Friday, calling Peres' accusations an "unbalanced outburst."

Responding to the charges that he also was responsible for the breakup of the last government, Rabin said he went along with Peres out of party loyalty. "I understand that he (Peres) has a loyalty problem. This has happened throughout his career. I acted differently. I know that Peres is no I."

Rabin also suggested that Peres as finance minister in the Likud-Labour coalition gave special grants of government funds to lure religious parties into a coalition with Labour.

"Look at the increase in special funds between 1988 and 1990. This points to the method with which they tried to achieve this," Rabin charged.

Beirut airport tries to shed 'terrorist haven' tag

BEIRUT (AP) — The immigration officer at Beirut International Airport held a passport up to the flickering candle on his desk, squinting to check the photograph of the traveller standing in the darkened terminal hall.

The airport's only functioning generator had broken down, as it often does.

Airport personnel worked by candlelight, checking in passengers with pens instead of computer terminals and inspecting bags by hand because the electronic scanning devices were out.

Pilots landed and took off without radio contact from the tower because of the power outage, until someone had the bright idea of hooking up the tower to a small generator in the terminal restaurant.

Beirut airport, the busiest in the Middle East before Lebanon's civil war erupted in 1975, still manages to function despite power cuts, shellfire, bombs and a chronic lack of electronic equipment.

The airport's radar was destroyed in air raids during Israel's 1982 invasion. Since then aircraft have landed with the aid of a radio beacon at the American University of Beirut.

Ghassan Abu Ghazali, a pilot for Beirut-based Middle East Airways (MEA), noted: "Not having a functioning radar isn't that big a problem. You should see some of the airports of Africa. Beirut's better than some of them. It's serviceable."

Shellfire has caused considerable damage and the airport was closed down for six months last year because of fighting.

That cost MEA around \$41 million. It has survived the 15 years of warfare through a combination of astute management and dogged refusal to die.

Planes that land at night have to do so with the beachside runway lit by car headlights. The cables for the runway lights were stolen years ago.

Abdul Menhem Shehadeh, director-general of civil aviation, has the unenviable job of restoring the airport in mainly Muslim west Beirut to meet international safety and technical requirements.

He said foreign airlines that once used Beirut have been approached to return. But so far none have made any commitment because of the uncertainty surrounding Lebanon's future. MEA Executive Vice President

Khaled Musfi acknowledged that Beirut is no longer the Middle East's aviation hub and is unlikely to be so again.

Up to 2,500 travellers use the airport daily with an average of 22 flights landing or taking off. Before the war, there were more than 100 flights a day and around 50,000 passengers.

Shehadeh said he has asked the Lebanese government for 18 billion pounds (\$28.8 million) to refurbish Beirut airport. Given the fractious state of Lebanon's economy, he's unlikely to get it.

But even if he did, it will take more than sprucing up the dilapidated, war-battered airport to wipe out its notoriety as a hijacker's paradise.

Five Westerners were kidnapped on the highway leading to the airport between May 22, 1985, and Jan. 17, 1987. Dozens of MEA employees, most of them Christians, have been killed or kidnapped.

Washington branded the airport a "terrorist haven" and banned MEA and its sister cargo line, Trans-Mediterranean Airlines (TMA), from U.S. airspace and airports after a TWA jetliner was hijacked in June 1985 and a navy diver killed at the airport,

where militiamen joined the hijackers.

U.S. officials in Washington said discussions are underway with the Lebanese to resume cargo flights to Beirut, but not passenger services. They declined to give details.

Thirty airlines used to fly in and out of Beirut a few years ago, even amid the civil war fighting. Now, there are only three apart from MEA and TMA — the Syrian, Soviet and Bulgarian flag carriers.

The hijackings and abductions have ceased since Syria deployed 7,500 troops in West Beirut in February 1987 to crack down on unruly militias.

But a few months after the Syrians moved in, a bomb hidden in a briefcase carried by a woman exploded in the crowded terminal, killing seven people and wounding 73.

Since then the Syrians have tightened security in and around the airport, and Shehadeh claimed: "The airport is now deemed safe."

Departing travellers have to go through nine security checks by Syrian soldiers and Lebanese police before boarding outgoing flights.

JORDAN TELEVISION

PROGRAMME ONE
15:30 Koran
15:40 Programme review
15:45 Children's programme
17:30 Educational programme
18:00 World Cup
19:20 Programme review
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Arabic series
21:30 Programme review
21:40 Consumer's Guide
22:20 Local programme
23:00 News in Arabic

PROGRAMME TWO
19:50 Change Elyose
19:55 News in French
19:55 Documentary
19:55 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Empty Nest
21:00 Encounter
21:30 Classical Music
21:45 News in English
22:00 World Cup
23:45 Allo... Allo...

PRAYER TIMES

03:51 Fajr
05:26 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
12:37 Dhuhr
16:18 Asr
19:49 Maghreb
21:24 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swellish, Tel. 810740

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.
Terrence Church Tel. 622566.
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.
Anglican Church Tel. 625383. Tel. 628543.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772611.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Assiout International Church Tel. 685326.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 812955.
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 813917, 649922.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
It will be hot and winds will be northeasterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Amman Min./max. temp. 19 / 36
Aqaba 24 / 39
Dera 21 / 38
Jordan Valley 23 / 38

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 34, Aqaba 36. Humidity readings: Amman 15 per cent, Aqaba 29 per cent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Tawfik Oub' 623029
Dr. Fayad Halayqa 793522
Dr. Othman Othman 774024
Dr. Zaid Zaghloul 638591
First pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asama pharmacy 637055
Naironkh pharmacy 626672
Al Salami pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 640445
Shamsi pharmacy 637660

IRBID:
Dr. Mufied Al Jubour (—)
Al Shamsi pharmacy (985238)
ZARQA:
Dr. Khalil Abu Hassan (—)
Khalil pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue 630341
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 980390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone
Repairs 623101
Jordan Television 771111
Radio Jordan 774011
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khafid Maternity, J. Amn. 642816
Al-Khadra Maternity, J. Amn. 642412
Jabal Al-Nabata Maternity 642362
Mallat, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsi 661714
Shamsi Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musaber Hospital 6672279
The Islamic, Abdali 66612737
Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646
Al-Muhajir 771013
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 77511126
Army, Marka 89161115
Queen Alia Hospital 60224050
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)991071
Ras Sina Hospital (09)987632

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)522805, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
06:05 Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
06:40 Damascus (RJ)
06:45 Aqaba (RJ)
06:30 Kuwait (RJ)

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
06:05 Aqaba (RJ)
06:40 Jeddah (RJ)
06:40 Tripoli (RJ)
06:40 Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)
06:45 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
06:50 Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
06:50 London (RJ)
06:50 Paris (RJ)
06:50 Beirut (RJ)
06:50 Kuwait (RJ)
06:50 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
06:50 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)

16:30 Doha (RJ)
16:30 Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
16:30 New Delhi (RJ)
16:40 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (RJ)
16:40 New York, Montreal (RJ)
16:40 Jeddah (RJ)
16:40 Beirut (RJ)
16:40 London (RJ)
16:40 Frankfurt (RJ)
16:40 Tripoli (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
06:25 Baghdad (IA)
13:20 Cairo (MS)
13:25 Riyadh (SV)
17:30 Kuwait (KJ)
17:30 Dubai (EK)
18:30 Dubai (EK)
23:10 Damascus, Paris (AF)

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
06:05 Aqaba (RJ)
06:40 Jeddah (RJ)
06:40 Tripoli (RJ)
06:40 Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)
06:45 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
06:50 Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
06:50 London (RJ)
06:50 Paris (RJ)
06:50 Beirut (RJ)
06:50 Kuwait (RJ)
06:50 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
06:50 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
06:15 Beirut (ME)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in the per kg
Apples 750 / 650
Bananas 700 / 600
Bananas (Mukassar) 500 / 400
Beans 500 / 400
Cabbage 110 / 80
Carrot 120 / 100
Cauliflower 120 / 100
Corn 120 / 100
Cucumbers (large) 120 / 100
Cucumbers (small) 120 / 100
Dates 400 / 300
Eggplant 120 / 100
Garlic 110 / 80
Grapes 110 / 80
Lemon 400 / 300
Mallow 80 / 50
Marrow (large) 80 / 50
Marrow (small) 140 / 120
Onion (dry) 180 / 140
Orange 200 / 150
Peas

الجزيرة

Negotiations under way on Aqaba railway ownership

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — Negotiations are under way among the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Transport and the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC) for the transfer of ownership of the Aqaba Railway Corporation (ARC) to the JPMC, according to officials. The railway corporation, which is exclusively used to transport phosphate and other minerals from JPMC mines in the south to Aqaba for export, is a wholly government-owned entity. It has been steadily losing and the government now feels that the JPMC should bear the burden, according to economists.

The entire operations of the corporation are devoted to the phosphate mines company, and the government apparently feels that the company should absorb the losses, an economist told the Jordan Times.

The government is also a majority shareholder in the phosphate mines company, which is now in a better position in view of increased exports of its products, added the economist, who spoke to the Jordan Times on condition of anonymity. No figures were immediately available on the operational losses of the corporation.

The focus of the ongoing negotiations is the value of the "rolling stock" of the railway corporation — engines, carriages and loading equipment etc., JPMC Director-General Wasef Azar told the Jordan Times Friday. He declined to give any specific details of the talks, conducted by representatives of the ministries of the finance and transport and the board of directors of the JPMC.

"The government has offered to transfer the ownership of the 'rolling stock' of the corporation to the JPMC," Azar said. "The talks are continuing, and it is premature to give any details." Other sources said a decision on the transfer of ownership of the "mobile assets" of the corporation — estimated at between JD 14 million and JD 15 million — was expected soon. The deal does not include the railway tracks and some of the fixed facilities of the corporation since they are located on government-owned land.

The Aqaba Railway Corporation was created in 1975 as

part of the Hijaz Railway Corporation and was branched out as a separate entity in 1979. The corporation, which has a rail network of 290 kilometres linking JPMC mines at Al Hasa, Shidiyah and Wadi Al Abyad, now owns 29 locomotive engines and 400 wagons of capacity ranging between 40 and 45 tonnes.

According to informed sources, the negotiations also involve questions over whether the JPMC would be responsible for the corporation's liabilities — mostly loans obtained for expansion purposes, including the building of a \$5 million locomotive workshop at Aqaba, according to the sources. The government is responsible for other liabilities, related to the rail network itself, while the loans linked to the facilities of the corporation that will be transferred to the JPMC be handled by the company.

If the deal goes through, the JPMC may set up a different department to run the corporation, which has about 700 permanent employees and about 300 temporary workers on daily wage basis, the sources said.

Jordan to contribute to Arab document on care for children

AMMAN (Petra) — Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHFF) is taking part in a pan-Arab meeting opening in Tunis Saturday to prepare an Arab document on children care which will be submitted to Arab heads of state for approval prior to its presentation to the international summit on children due to be held in New York in September.

NHFF Director-General Inaam Al Mufti, who is taking part in the Tunis meeting, said that the Arab delegates have already laid down the broadlines of such document at a meeting held in Cairo last month under the auspices of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

The projected Arab document, he said, will reflect the Arab Nations determination to achieve peace which "is indispensable to open the way for the children of Palestine, Lebanon, the Golan

Heights and Africa to grow and develop." "The document outlines the current situation in the Arab region and focuses attention on the adverse effects of the Israeli occupation of Arab land, the need for an Arab-Israeli settlement and national efforts in rural and Badia social development as well as bridging the gap between men and women in the Arab World," Mufti said.

"The document gives special attention to the tragic life of the Palestinian children and calls for an end to their suffering and for their legitimate rights to living in peace and security," Mufti added.

Furthermore, the document urges the heads of world governments to pool their efforts to bring about peace to the Middle East region.



His Majesty King Hussein Thursday receives ACC ministers of planning (Petra photo)

APC celebrates the Army and Great Arab Revolt Day

KARAK (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Ibn Al Hussein Thursday stood in for His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan in attending the celebration held by the Arab Potash Company (APC) to mark the Army and Great Arab Revolt Day.

Prince Faisal unveiled the plaque of the monument, which was put up by the company to commemorate the martyrs of the Jordanian Armed Forces who, through their sacrifice, contributed to laying down the infrastructure for the factory and safeguarding the achievements of Jordan.

APC Director General Ali Al Nsour expressed his appreciation and that of the company for the great services of the Armed Forces. He said that Jordan enjoys a unique status among the world countries, after the Soviet

Union and the United States in the fertilizer industry.

Talking about potash industry in Jordan, Nsour said it dates back to the 1930s when Jordan started extracting it from the Dead Sea.

He pointed out that the APC hit its production capacity of 1.2 million tonnes in 1987 and was able to increase the capacity by a further 16 per cent as a result of the improvements the company made. However, he said, the company targets 2.2 million tonnes a year by the year 1996, through two stages: during the first stage, which ends by 1994, the company plans to increase its production capacity to 1.8 million from the current capacity of 1.4 million tonnes a day.

In the second stage, which will end in 1996, the company will have hit its 2.2 million tonnes of annual production.

ACC states to cooperate in agriculture and planning

AMMAN (Petra) — Ministers of agriculture and planning in the four-member Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) countries ended two days of meetings in Amman during which they reached decisions on ways to implement ACC agreements in agriculture and planning.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra Friday said that the ministers of agriculture have reached agreement on an executive programme to unify legislations in Egypt, Iraq, Yemen and Jordan concerning veterinary work, the use of pesticides combating locusts and laying down the basis for a data bank to provide information to ACC members in agriculture-related fields.

According to Ministry of Agriculture's Secretary-General Sami Sunnaa, who disclosed the outcome of the deliberations, the four states will work on the creation of an advanced research centre for marine life in Yemen and will create a team of experts to advise on ways of increasing cereal production.

He said that decisions were in implementation of an ACC agreement reached by ministers of agriculture at the Baghdad meeting in July 1989.

The ACC ministers of planning also concluded a two-day meeting during which they endorsed a formula for the implementation of agreements in planning fields. Among the decisions taken was

one calling on all ACC members to take part in a meeting designed to prepare planning projects for all ACC countries.

The four states will work on a basic plan to streamline statistics work, will exchange information related to scientific research in economy and will exchange visits by technicians in the course of implementing the agreement.

The four ministers were received at the Royal Court by His Majesty King Hussein following the conclusion of the meetings Thursday. The King voiced his satisfaction with the outcome of the meeting and expressed Jordan's support for the implementation of the ACC agreement on planning.

Independents clinch veterinary association council

By Marianne M. Sleahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Election results of the Jordan Veterinary Association's seven-member executive council reflected a kaleidoscope of independent and politicized trends in the 18-year-old professional union.

Dr. Mohammad Al Tal, a self-described independent "apoliticized" candidate, was elected the association's president during the second round of voting in which he received 65 out of 143 votes cast.

Despite the relatively low voter turnout (143 of the 202 registered voters took part), observers felt the results were representative of the electorate.

"Had all of the association's 394 members been registered and eligible to vote we would

have had an executive council dominated by Islamists, which has been the case for the last few years," said one long-time association member.

Members said that an obligatory payment to the association's pension plan along with the yearly membership fees were a primary reason for the poor voter participation.

"The pension plan is relatively expensive and so that is why the turnout was not higher," said veteran association member Abdul Fatah Keilani, who came in second in the presidential race.

Keilani said that the race for president had not been among different politicized veterinarians but rather between those who had political inclinations and those that did not.

"Most of those who are politicized in one way or

another, voted for me," said Keilani. He said that his supporters were both from the left, right and centre of the political spectrum.

Although no blocs were evident in a race which heralded individual candidates, all of which ran on independent tickets, observers could single out at least two politicized groups of candidates. "There were two 'Islamic' candidates and three left-wing and pan-Arabist candidates," said one candidate who lost.

Results indicated that while only one Islamist won a seat on the council, two of the leftist and pan-Arabist candidates were elected along with three non-politically oriented veterinarians.

While Dr. Ibrahim Abbadi, a pan-Arabist, was elected in the first round of Friday's vote

by receiving more than 50 per cent of the votes cast (82 out of 142), the votes had to be cast in a second round because no other candidate received the minimum number of votes.

During the second round of voting no candidate was again able to receive 50 per cent of the votes cast, but association members agreed to accept the votes as final. As a result, one leftist, one Islamist and three unpoliticized candidates won seats on the council.

The new council is expected to hold internal elections of office bearers within the council.

The newly elected council members are: Mohammad Al Tal as president and Ibrahim Abbadi, Faysal Zayyadin, Abdullah Hafez, Shaker Khreis, Ziad Momani and Ismat Sabri as members.

Jordan participates in Indonesian fair

AMMAN (J.T.) — A total of 18 Jordanian companies are currently taking part in an Indonesian trade fair held in Jakarta, according to Nayef Momani, Jordan's ambassador to Indonesia.

The ambassador said that Jordan's trade ties with Indonesia were improving all the time and Jordan was selling more phosphates and potash to Indonesia.

According to Halim Abu Zahneh, the executive director of the Jordanian Exporters Association, the 18 companies which are participating in the fair hope to market Jordanian products in exchange for timber, rubber and textiles from Indonesia.

Last week Indonesia's minister of labour, who paid a several-day visit to Jordan, discussed with officials here prospects for increasing the volume of trade.

Jordan, WFP extend agricultural project

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan and the World Food Programme (WFP) Thursday signed a formal agreement for a five-year extension of a project to develop the highland agricultural regions of Jordan.

WFP will provide \$26.5 million to pay for food commodities and transportation in the course of implementing the project which is undertaken by the Ministry of Agriculture.

The new phase of the project, concentrated in the highland areas of eleven districts in the Kingdom, will cover 150,000 dunams of land which receive an average of 250 millimetres of rain fall annually, according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

The project features several schemes designed to increase agricultural production and reduce soil erosion. In soil conservation, plans call for the construction of stone contour terraces, earth contour banks.

Over the five-year period fruit trees will be planted, mainly olives.

The agreement was signed by WFP Executive Director James Ingram, who was on a visit to Jordan and a tour of areas involved in the project, and the Minister of Agriculture Suleiman Alabiyyat.

"WFP has assisted Jordan in its agricultural development since 1964 and it is hoped that through this extension local farmers will be encouraged to double efforts and increase their production," Ingram said following the signing ceremony.

The ministry's project Director Salem Ekour said that apart from planting trees, the project entails drilling artesian wells and fencing off planted areas.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of paintings depicting the Jordanian environment by Adel Al Shurra, Mohammad Aswad and Hani Khazza'leh at the Housing Bank Art Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition entitled "La revolution: 200 ans apres" at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of Ottoman textiles at Abdul Hameed Shamsan Foundation.
- ★ Exhibition of orientalist paintings by two German orientalist artists at the Goethe Institute — open 9-12 a.m. and 4-6 p.m.
- ★ Exhibition by Rafiq Labham at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by Mohammed Al Ameri at the Royal Cultural Centre (opens 6:00 p.m.).

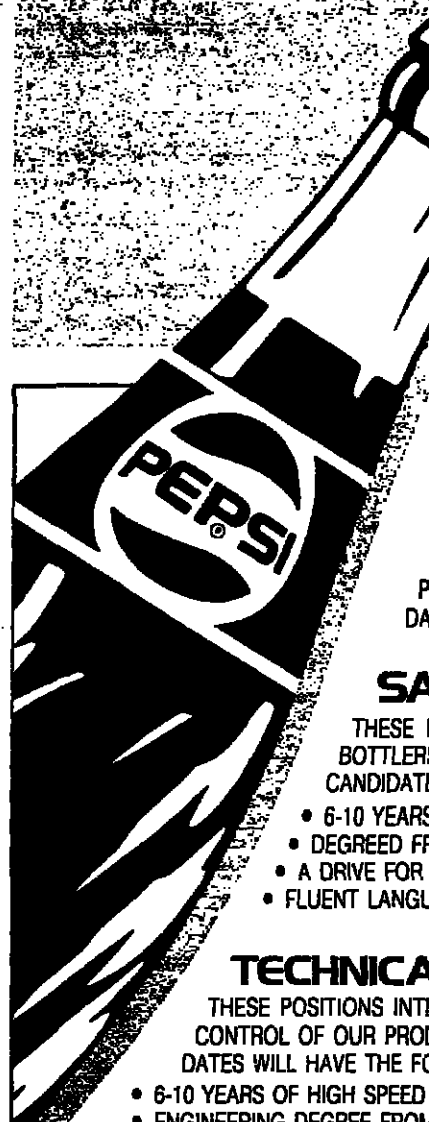
FILM

- ★ German film entitled "Frühlingsinfekt" (English subtitled) at the Goethe Institute — 8:00 p.m.

Jordan, Iraq to boost cooperation in civil defence

AMMAN (Petra) — Iraqi Civil Defence Director General Maj. Gen. Amer Siraj arrived in Amman at the head of a civil defence delegation, on a week-long visit to Jordan for talks with Jordanian officials on enhancing bilateral cooperation in the field of Civil Defence, and countering natural and man-made disasters.

In an arrival statement Siraj said invitation to visit Jordan was extended to him by his Jordanian counterpart Maj. Gen. Afif Al Ghoni to look at Jordan's experience in the field of civil defence and to exchange information and experience in this regard.



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Time is the essence

THE CHANCES for a reasonable compromise and fair accommodation between Moscow and Lithuania have received a breathing space when the two sides agreed Sunday to put Lithuania's decision for a precipitous breakaway on hold. Hitherto the two sides were locked in a political jam that exacerbated the situation. Now the two parties have given signals that suggest that they recognise and respect each other's concerns and objectives. While Lithuania has every right to exercise the right to self-determination and even secede from the Soviet Union, Moscow has an equal right to call for an orderly and lawful secession. Fortunately the two parties gave expression to this respect for each other's perspectives by agreeing to suspend the unilateral decision taken a few months ago by Lithuania to disassociate itself from the Soviet Union and go its separate way. What remains to be done after this important cooling-off period is equally important. If after the decision to suspend the Lithuanian decision for independence nothing concrete gets done and the negotiating process become a long drawn out one, then there would be grounds for fears that the suspension decision is simply tactical. That's why the two sides need to pursue an understanding in the fastest time possible. The eyes of the Lithuanian people are focused on the next step and until unless this following stage comes to fruition, they will view this interim decision with suspicion that may erode the newly found commonality of positions. Likewise the eyes of the Soviet people are equally centred on how this situation will evolve and gets rectified.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

THE U.S. administration's decision to suspend its dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) is an ugly blackmail that reflects the lack of seriousness Washington had been attaching on such talks, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Friday. Indeed this decision can be considered as a gift from Washington to Israel, rewarding it for its inhuman practices in occupied Palestine, the paper noted. There is no doubt that Washington's decision to halt the talks with the PLO will encourage the Israelis to commit further atrocities and more crimes in Palestine, the paper continued. It said the United States has now proved that it was waiting for an excuse to sever the talks, because it had regretted taking the decision to open the dialogue in the first place, the paper added. Now that the United States took this move, the PLO is no more committed to recognise the Jewish state, and although the organisation had renounced terrorism which it never practiced, it must feel free to opt for any form of struggle against the Zionist enemy to liberate the occupied Arab lands, the paper advised. It said that the PLO should not remain committed to any pledge it gave to the United States since it is Washington which went back on its commitments and promises first. The U.S. administration's decision to suspend the dialogue, the paper stressed, strengthens the Arab countries belief that the U.S.-Israeli alliance is embarking on a new move to escalate tension in the Middle East region and to help the Israelis try to fulfil their dreams.

Writing in Al Ra'i Arabic daily columnist Abdul Rahim Omar tackles Israel's manoeuvres designed to cause further splits among Arab states, citing Yitzhak Shamir's moves towards Syria. The writer recalls that Shamir has promised not to launch an aggression on Syria which he described as following a moderate line. Furthermore, Shamir has enlisted help from Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to arrange for a meeting between himself and the Syrian president, the writer notes. He says that at the same time Shamir is going ahead with plans to settle Jews in the occupied Golan Heights; which means that Shamir is not willing to offer any price for a meeting with the Syrian leader. It has been noticed that Shamir's recent moves came in the midst of a wide scale campaign being launched by Israel and the West against Iraq, and following the Arab summit in Baghdad which was not attended by Hafez Al Assad. Although we strongly believe that Shamir's overtures will not receive a favourable reply from Damascus, nor will Assad change his nationalist and pan-Arab stand, says Omar, yet Syria's differences with Iraq have opened the way for Israel to fish in muddy waters and to try to create more tension between Damascus and Baghdad with the hope of deepening the rifts in Arab ranks.

Al Dustour daily said that the American decision to suspend a dialogue with the PLO has brought delight to the Israeli extremists and opened the door wide for Israel to pursue its criminal policies. With the suspension of dialogue, the Middle East has now become exposed to a new cycle of violence which could result in a new Arab-Israeli war, the paper noted. It said that the United States should be reminded of the huge amounts of weapons of destruction what have been amassed in this region, awaiting the proper moment in the absence of the political option. The Zionists will of course see in the American president's announcement as a green light for their aggressive policies to continue, and to create the right atmosphere for war, the paper noted. Therefore, the suspension of the dialogue is considered as a serious set-back to all peace efforts, and a renewed attempt to bolster the hands of terrorists in the Middle East.

Fundamentalism threatens Mideast

The following article by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, headlined "Middle East Dominoes" appeared in the Washington Post of June 18, 1990.

AMMAN — It is not enough for George Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev to consolidate détente between the Soviet Union and the United States. They need also to demonstrate a fresh concern for the welfare of the Middle East — a concern that regrettably wasn't displayed in their Washington summit. They must not allow the Mideast to be marginalised. Continued conflict in our region threatens the existence of a rational global order.

The fair resolution of the Palestine issue should become a peace item on the international agenda. This issue must not be allowed to be usurped by a fixation — especially in the west — on revolution and terrorism.

Unfortunately, the Arab consensus continues to be thwarted by various forces. Moderate Arabs were dismayed by the U.S. veto in the U.N. Security Council over international supervision and the observation of the outrages committed in the name of security in the occupied territories.

It is important to emphasise the desirability of an international peace conference, with the participation of the superpowers and the sponsorship of the U.N. Security Council.

We can hardly afford to wait until the Arabs and Israelis make suitable compromises that would bring them to the negotiating table. They must be prodded to talk to each other. And they must be induced to reach out not only to each other but also collectively to grasp new opportunities for a lasting peace.

The fashioning of political rapprochement — "peace" — between Arabs and Israelis will surely translate into something they need just as badly: Equitable economic development in the region, particularly in those countries that aren't blessed with rich natural resources such as oil. Israel has paid a heavy economic price to ensure its survival. The Arab-Israeli conflict has similarly imposed heavy demographic and economic burdens on Jordan.

After lowering the budget deficit from 30 per cent to 11 per cent of the GDP between

1985 and 1988, Israel's deficit rose last year to nearly 40 per cent of GDP. The country's high defence expenditure demands that much-needed funds be diverted from domestic development, a situation also experienced by Jordan and other Arab states desirous of regional peace. For Jordan, a country of barely three million people, to be spending \$600 million annually on defence — or 16 per cent of our GDP — is simply untenable.

Jordan believes that while the two superpowers must assume greater responsibility in expediting the peace process, there must be greater regional economic cooperation to provide political stability and enhance the peace constituency in the Arab World. Presidents Bush and Gorbachev can strengthen their reputations as peace-makers by renewing their commitment to ending the generations-old conflict in the Middle East.

Since the Israeli settlements in the occupied territories violate international law, the United States and Europe should predicate their subsidisation of the immigration and resettlement of Soviet Jews on Israel's freezing all settlement activity in the occupied territories. They can do much to ameliorate this difficult situation by increasing annual quotas for Soviet Jews to settle on their own countries.

The only acceptable basis for a just and lasting settlement is a fair exchange of land for peace — as embodied in U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338. These call for the withdrawal of foreign presence from the occupied territories and also offer implicit recognition of Israel's sovereign existence.

The six-day war of 1967 represented a loss of 40 per cent of Jordan's GNP and the acquisition of more than 400,000 refugees on account of Israel's occupation of the West Bank. The sharp drop in assistance from oil-producing Arab countries from \$1.2 billion in 1981 to less than \$400 million today has pushed resource-poor Jordan deeply into debt. Contributing to our economic problems has been the world decline in commodity prices, although we have made every effort to streamline the phosphate indus-

try, our biggest export trade item.

As the revenues of our oil-producing neighbours declined, remittances from expatriate Jordanians in the Gulf — the primary source of private-sector foreign exchange — have dropped more than 20 per cent in the last three years to less than \$800 million. Meanwhile, Jordan's total external debt has risen from \$3.5 billion in 1984 to nearly \$8 billion. We have laboured mightily to comply with recovery guidelines established by the international monetary fund — but there is a limit to how much pain and deprivation we can impose on our already burdened people.

less and unemployed young. This movement, influential in Muslim societies from South-east Asia westward through Afghanistan to Lebanon and Morocco, may yet touch the intifada.

Unless peace prevails, there will be a different kind of war, a war that knows no territorial or national boundaries. It will be a war not between nation-states but against the nation-state. The aim of this war would be to reduce national entities to their socio-ethnic components. Its only triumphant residue will be politico-religious fundamentalism — Islamic, Christian and Jewish. The Gulf, Palestine and Lebanon are only the flash points. This war, if uncontained, could extend from Cairo to Islamabad and beyond. We would then witness the ethnic Lebanonisation of our region.

The domino theory is alive and kicking in the Middle East. Except that this time the threat is from fundamentalist fanatics, and it will annihilate moderate and secular-minded societies.

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VIEW FROM AMMAN

The peace processless

By Kamel S. Abu Jaber

BEFORE considering whether Israel is the symptom or the disease itself we have to consider why has the situation in the Middle East deteriorated so rapidly. Today the solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict is further than ever before. In the face of a suicidal people fired by a fanatic ideology, we have our own people, most of whom had to be dragged into the 20th century screaming and kicking. How can a non-confrontational people like us, culturally and historically middlemen, striking bargains and avoiding conflict, stand against the Israelis of the Mas'adah and the Sam'oon complex. Unless we reassess our whole way of life and acquire a new discipline we are doomed.

The conflict is not simply over territory or borders. It is also a cultural, civilisational one that goes beyond the military dimension, reaching to the very soul of the area. Israel and its Zionist triumph in the West, indeed now also the East and elsewhere in the world, are near supreme. Only the Arab — more so than the Muslim — civilisation stands out and dares to challenge. For Israel has good relations with many Islamic countries, but none with any Arab country. Not even with Egypt where the mistrust and hatred is closer to the skin than most people realise.

What can we offer the Israelis more than we have already? His Majesty King Hussein practically lived in his aeroplane between 1967-1988 trying to convince somebody to convince the Israelis to abandon their intransigent and wild dreams. From London to Washington, to Bonn, Rome, Sydney, Peking, Singapore and almost every major capital of the world, he talked and convinced. Nothing would budge the Americans to budge the Israelis. President Arafat finally carried the mantle, and he too has been trying to convince somebody to convince the Americans to convince the Israelis to talk to him, or to any Palestinians within or without Palestine.

The Israelis do not talk to Jordan; they do not talk to the Palestine Liberation Organisation; they do not talk to the Palestinians inside the occupied territories or to any Palestinians whatsoever. Shamir, after much coaxing and inducements, finally comes up with a plan and when his partners in the coalition government insist on its implementation, — mind you his own plan — the government collapses. And in the midst of the murder, arson, gassing and repression, the Israelis, first Peres, and then Shamir, leisurely proceed to negotiate how to form a new government. In the meantime the whole world is holding its breath waiting for the birth of the new Israeli government. President Bush, in the meanwhile, gently advises Premier Shamir to have the latter's army exercise "restraint" in repressing the wave of violence that followed the murder of unarmed Palestinian workers. The "restraint" resulted in the death of only seven Palestinians and wounding of seven hundred the following day.

On May 31, 1990, I was interviewed by an American professor who is currently on the staff of the Foreign Relations Committee of the House of Representatives. In the course of our conversation while following the revelation that the United States had sent a letter advising the Arab summit leaders as to how to address certain issues, he said that the Arabs "are not giving the United States any incentive to put pressure on Israel."

What kind of incentives are we talking about, I asked? Then I added, "We have renounced terror (sic); we have — all the Arabs — accepted U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338; American interest in the Middle East are well and healthy; much of the nearly trillion Arab dollars are invested in America; the oil is flowing smoothly and we have not only not turned Communist but fought with terrific ardors this ideology." And finally I added, "we, the injured party, are suing for peace... what other incentives can we offer..." I really wanted to know!

His reply was revealing: "That is not enough. First you must stop your verbal attacks on America. The summit leaders should have addressed a letter to President Bush outlining in detail how time is running out in the area. The letter should state that we — the Arab leaders — are willing and ready to conclude a collective non-conditional peace with Israel and normalise the situation with her since we have only peaceful aims." The professor added that it might also be a good idea to outline a time table for all the above to be accomplished.

I was not only astonished but dum-founded as well. After much debate over the above, I finally remarked: "What, if after we do all that Israel still maintains its present stance?" He gave no answer though; his demeanor revealed that it is a chance we must take.

In Arabic we have a proverb that goes, "If your people turn crazy, trying to maintain your own sanity will do you no good." The radicals might be right after all. You cannot fight this kind of disease except with this kind of medicine. We must understand that we cannot wage peace. Only war can be waged. Peace is in the hearts of men: Men who have hearts not, heartless, ruthless, efficient, illogical, and driven automatons.

It is also very dangerous that now we feel so isolated, hounded and cornered.

Will Berlin resume its role?

By Tom Heneghan

Reuter

BONN, — A united Germany with one state, one government and one flag could be here in a matter of months.

But one capital? That could take years...

Cosmopolitan Berlin, the last capital of a united Germany, is hard at work rejoining its divided halves and preparing to resume its role as the power centre of the new nation.

Sleepy Bonn, West Germany's 'temporary' capital since 1949, has launched a David-and-Goliath campaign to keep parliament, ministries and foreign embassies along the Rhine.

Even the business centre Frankfurt, harking back to its 1848 role as home of the Germans' first elected assembly, has made a bid as a compromise choice.

The Germans' debate over their capital has become so bogged down in disputes over symbols, history and taxpayers' money that the politicians' classic solution to a black-and-white problem — a compromise — looks like the most likely answer.

"For me it's not a question of either Berlin or Bonn," said

Dorothee Wilms, Bonn's Minister for Inner-German Relations. "I can imagine it could be both Berlin and Bonn."

As the debate now stands, it looks like the head of state, whose role is strictly ceremonial, could move to Berlin quickly and the once-divided city could be made the official capital.

The real seats of power — the chancellor's office, the parliament and government ministries — would stay in Bonn and hold regular but symbolic meetings in Berlin.

If it comes, a full move to Berlin by all the politicians, bureaucrats, lobbyists, diplomats and journalists now here could stretch into the next century, some here believe.

During the euphoric weeks after the Berlin Wall opened last November, it seemed almost unpatriotic to argue for any city but Berlin as the capital of the reunited Germany.

But many West Germans, seeing the far-away metropolis of four million as tainted by Russian centralism and Hitler's Nazi Reich, soon took a new look at the quite city of 300,000 they had long poked fun at.

"In the world's eyes, Bonn stands for a democratic and peaceful post-war Germany,"

said Anke Fuchs, a prominent opposition leader. "It's German in a nice and harmless way."

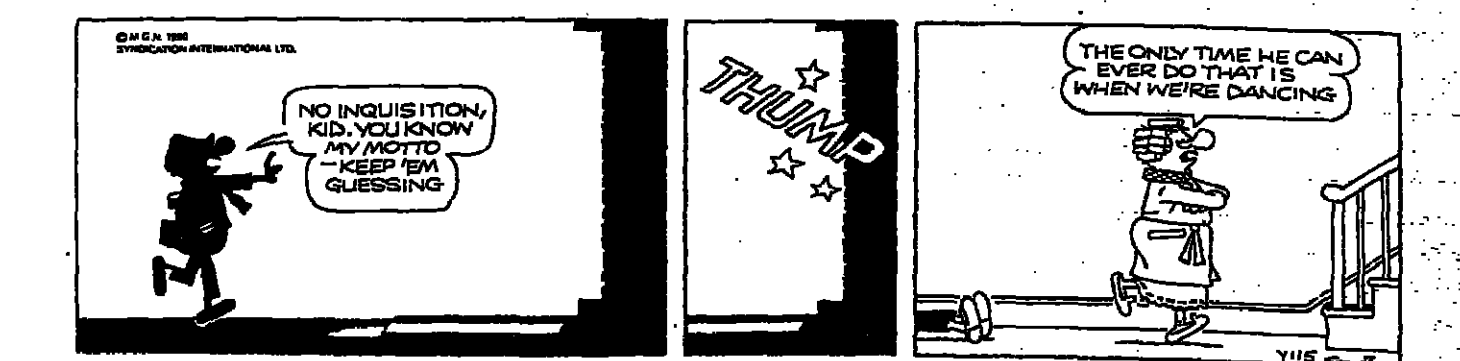
"Bonn stands for the federal structure of the new German state, for decentralisation, for diversity and strong and active states," said Johannes Rau.

Others looked at the cost of a move — estimated by the pro-Bonn campaigners at 80 billion marks (\$48 billion) or more — and decided it would be too much to ask of taxpayers already worried about the huge but still unknown bill West Germany will have to pay for unity.

Mutt'n'Jeff



Andy Capp



Peanuts



LETTERS

Disappointed

To the Editor,

I was disappointed — but not surprised — to learn that the United States has broken off discussions with the PLO.

I was disappointed because I recall that the United States took no action to break off relations with Israel in April, 1988, when international Israeli terrorists invaded Tunisia and murdered Khalil Al Wazir, a civilian executive with the PLO.

I was disappointed because I recall that there was not even the threat to break off relations with Israel when uniformed Israeli terrorists invaded Iraq and destroyed a nuclear power plant then under construction.

As you commented on the editorial page of your June 21-22 issue, the United States decision-makers have only themselves to blame for what comes next.

An American living in Jordan



All eyes, this tree frog lives at an elevation of 2,300 feet in a newly protected tropical forest in Costa Rica. (Life photo).

Amphibians will jump, hop and slither right out of this world

By Richard Cole
Associated Press

MIAMI — Frogs, toads and salamanders are vanishing around the world in a trend biologists say appears linked to the planet's deteriorating environment.

From the United States to India, Japan and Australia, scientists report, whole amphibian populations have disappeared or are declining, even in protected reserves.

"There is no consistent pattern," says University of Miami biologist Marc Hayes. "There doesn't seem to be any obvious global cause."

Hayes, who heads a new U.S. committee on declining amphibians, says humans should worry not only because of the loss of animal species, but because amphibians' highly sensitive biology make them the "canary in the coal mine" — an environmental early warning system.

Amphibians, including frogs, toads and salamanders, were the first land vertebrates. They appeared 400 million years ago, long before dinosaurs, and about 200 million years ago evolved into species similar to present-day varieties.

That longevity appears imperiled. Studies presented at an international conference in February documented a sharp drop worldwide in amphibian populations.

Leopard frogs are no longer sighted in Canada. The common European toad has disappeared from regions in Norway. Three species of miniature frogs vanished from Puerto Rico. Salamander populations are shrinking in the western United States, and Japan reports several frog species are in decline.

A recently discovered Australian frog that fascinated biologists because it hatched its young in its stomach apparently became extinct in "only" one season. The Monte Verde nature Reserve in Costa Rica reports all of its amphibian populations have declined, and the golden toad that once carpeted its forests may be

extinct.

Some causes of the phenomenon are known, and vary from country to country. But cases such as the loss of frogs in Australia or U.S. preserves leave biologists puzzled.

"In some of the areas that are the most protected, frogs are disappearing, and we have no explanation for it," Hayes says.

"There are a whole suite of species that have disappeared from very wide ranges in the United States."

David Wake, a zoologist at the University of California at Berkeley who chaired the February conference, says acid rain could be one of the culprits killing off salamanders in the rocky mountains of the western United States.

Hayes says ultraviolet light is a known threat to frog's eggs, and increased amounts of the harmful radiation entering through the thinning ozone layer could be destructive. Another hazard for frogs is stocking ponds with bass and other predator fish, especially in areas where the animals evolved with no such enemies, and have no ability to escape them.

In South Florida's Everglades, Hayes notes, pig frogs were hunted for food almost to extinction in the 1930s, and have never fully recovered. That pattern is being repeated in India and Indonesia.

Changing weather patterns caused by global warming could be to blame for the disappearance of amphibians in Costa Rica's Monte Verde Nature Preserve, said Hayes. Or roads and other development might be preventing them from moving between the many interconnected habitats they need to live, he said.

Amphibians, which absorb large amounts of water through their skins, are highly susceptible to heavy metals and other toxic material often exhausted into the air and water, Wake said.

Add widespread pesticide use, logging, dams, habitat destruction and other local factors, and the amphibian population is in

trouble.

"They are bio-indicators," Wake warns. "It may not be something that will hurt us directly, but they are telling us about the loss of resilience of our ecosystem, the loss of diversity."

The loss of amphibians also has some immediate noticeable effects on man, the scientists say. The poison dart frog has a toxin in its skin that, when refined, has been used successfully on an experimental basis for treating heart conditions, said Hayes. Frogs also are a source of food in many parts of the world.

Amphibians also are a key part of nature's ecological balance. "Frog tadpoles consume an enormous amount of algae," said Wake. "They keep our streams flowing clear and clean."

As adults, frogs move onto land, and become the top local predators, consuming enormous amounts of small insects, including mosquitoes.

The demise of pig frogs in the everglades, and expansion of grasslands that are flooded for much of the year, could have a bearing on the unexplained drop in wading birds, which have decreased by up to 90 per cent since the beginning of the century, says Hayes.

The variety of explanations and theories makes it clear there is no panacea to solve the problem, said Wake.

And he adds that no U.S. government agency is working on the problem in any case. He has been in contact with several U.S. senators on a project to create a national institute for the environment to protect the nation's biological wealth, but says so far, the amphibian problem in the United States is in the hands of over-worked, under-funded state game commissions.

Until there is more attention, biologists can only watch the disappearance of amphibian species with alarm.

"When the canary died, the miner left," says Wake. "Now the canary is dying, but we've got to sit here — where are we going to go?"

U.S. suicide debate: Death machine or high-tech beheading

By Bernd Debusmann
Reuter

WASHINGTON — A "doctor-assisted" suicide in Michigan this month has rekindled a long-standing controversy over Americans' right to die their own way — including a mathematician who wants his head cut off and frozen.

In an act which enraged many in the U.S. medical establishment, Dr. Jack Kevorkian connected a 54-year-old woman who had been told she was suffering from Alzheimer's disease to a "suicide machine" designed to kill by lethal injection.

"I think it was the right thing to do," Kevorkian said in a telephone interview from his home in Royal Oak, Michigan. "She wanted to end her life before the disease took her mind."

Alzheimer's disease gradually destroys the brain cells and wipes out memory, leaving victims unable to perform even basic tasks and eventually killing them.

After treatment with an experimental drug failed to halt her deterioration, Janet Adkins decided to seek Kevorkian's help and travelled 3,200 kilometres to Michigan from her home in Oregon, where strict laws would have caused legal problems for anyone

helping her to end her life.

The fear of dying helpless and without dignity has prompted thousands of Americans to join groups that fight for the individual's right to die and provide information on painless methods.

"We have people calling us all the time. We have 50,000 members and the number is growing," said Diana Smith of the Hemlock Society, named after the poison the Greek philosopher Socrates took to kill himself more than 2,000 years ago.

"People should be allowed to have physician-assisted suicide," Smith said, referring to Adkins' death. "That is our philosophy."

Echoing mainstream opinion, Robert Caplan, an expert on medical ethics, said in a television interview: "It is a moral outrage."

To avoid legal problems in Michigan, Kevorkian did not administer the poison that caused Adkins to die.

He connected an intravenous tube to her arm which dripped harmless saline solution.

She herself pushed a button that stopped the saline and replaced it with Thiopental, which induces unconsciousness. The machine then switched automatically to a poison that stops the heart.

The ethical and legal aspects of

assisted suicide — banned in every state but Michigan — have taxed courts across the country but perhaps the most intriguing problems raised to date are in California.

There, Thomas Donaldson, a 46-year-old mathematician with an incurable brain tumour, is fighting for the right to be decapitated. He wants to have his head put in frozen storage until such time as medicine is capable of bringing it back to life and health and attaching it to a new body.

Donaldson wants to use a procedure known as cryonic suspension, in which his body temperature would be lowered gradually and his blood replaced with chemicals that prevent the tissue damage that results from freezing.

Then his head would be severed and stored in a container of liquid nitrogen at a hundreds of degrees below zero.

Donaldson has filed a lawsuit to secure the right to have the operation performed before the tumour destroys his brain — and before he is declared legally dead. Advocates of this method say waiting for legal brain death reduces the chances of future success in reawakening.

There are obvious parallels between the Donaldson case and Adkins' wish to die before being



Deadly device: Dr. Jack Kevorkian with his homemade suicide machine

incapacitated by Alzheimer's disease. But Donaldson insists that his mind is far from suicide.

"We have here a fundamental disagreement about what constitutes death," he told Reuters in a telephone interview from his home in Sunnyvale, California. "What is suicide to other people is not suicide to me or other cryonics. Nor for the people who would be suspending me."

These people run the Alcor Foundation, one of three companies in the United States that specialise in cryonic suspension. So far, only people who have died have been placed in liquid nitrogen containers for future resuscitation.

"They can be preserved indefinitely," Alcor President Carlos Mondragon told Reuters. "And what will be needed to repair people and get them out of

cryonic suspension is something called molecular engineering, which has made considerable advances over the past few years."

The 14 "patients" being preserved at Alcor range in age from 23 to 83.

The elderly patient's head was suspended three years ago and at the time authorities launched an investigation to find out whether it was removed before or after she died. The conclusion: after.

Mondragon calls Donaldson's desire for decapitation while still alive a "rational gamble" and says that, while there are no guarantees, cryonic suspension gives a patient a chance at life.

Donaldson agrees: "I'm not interested in being frozen in itself is a desirable state. I just think it is better than all the other alternatives."

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Sports

West Germany faces World Cup showdown with Dutch

MILAN (R) — West Germany will have their World Cup aspirations tested to the full in the second round Sunday when they face European champions in the Netherlands, the nation they beat to lift the world title 16 years ago.

"Holland is the toughest draw of all," said assistant coach Bert Vogts, a member of the side which triumphed over the Dutch in the 1974 final.

The West Germans were installed by the bookmakers as the favourites after their first two rousing performances in the first round and should beat the Dutch on form.

The Netherlands have been far short of the brilliant best which carried them to the European championship title in 1988, disposing of hosts West Germany 2-1 in the semifinals.

But their superb pedigree ensures they remain the most dangerous of opponents, even though they failed to win any of their Group F matches, drawing 1-1 with outsiders Egypt, 0-0 with England and 1-1 with Ireland.

West Germany, at their most incisive for years, eclipsed Yugoslavia 4-1 and the United Arab Emirates 5-1 in Group D before dropping their concentration in a 1-1 draw against Colombia.

No other team came close to matching their 10-goal aggregate, largely supplied by their captain Lothar Matthäus (three) and strikers Rudi Voeller (three) and Joergen Klinsmann (two).

Much will hinge on the battle between the three West Germans of Inter Milan and the three Dutchmen of A.C. Milan, who will turn the clash in the San Siro stadium into something of a local derby.

Inter trio Matthäus, Klinsmann and defender Andreas Brehme played key parts in the Group D successes, with Brehme's raids on the left flank badly missed against the Colombians when the player was suspended for one match after two bookings.

Rund Gullit Marco Van Basten and Frank Rijkaard, the Dutch-

men who helped A.C. Milan win the European Cup twice in a row, will also revel in the passionate atmosphere of the soccer temple of San Siro with its crowds of over 70,000.

Gullit, yet to recapture his full powers after missing the best part of a year through injury, continued his revival with a fine goal against Ireland in Palermo Thursday.

"It was very disappointed with the first two matches but now I feel really liberated," he said. "We played much better and now we can only play better still."

They will indeed need to raise their game, with Van Basten rediscovering his sharp-shooting form in a Dutch attack which has so far mustered only two goals — one from Wim Kieft and the other from Gullit.

The odds seem stacked in favour of the West Germans, who have had two extra days to recuperate after last Tuesday's Group D closer, compared with the Dutch who were in action Thursday night.

Brazil meets Argentina in early clash of giants

TURIN, Italy (R) — Diego Maradona's Argentina, the World Cup holders, must overcome a double first Sunday when they meet Brazil in an early clash of Latin America's soccer giants.

Argentina have yet to win a World Cup match against their great rival and Maradona, their guiding light for almost a decade, has never played in a winning side against the Brazilians at national or club level.

"This match is between two teams that could win the cup," Argentine manager Carlos Bilardo said shortly before his squad prepared to head north to Turin for their first knockout game.

The premature meeting of two such powerful sides, who have met three times before in the cup, was due to Argentina's poor early

form which left them third in their group.

Brazil by contrast won all their matches to remain in this northern city, though their displays left much to be desired by their normally exacting standards.

"We are going to have to cut down on our mistakes in front of goal," said manager Sebastiao Lazaroni whose side scored only four goals in their three opening round matches.

But Lazaroni, at 39 the youngest coach in the tournament, is resisting calls to abandon his cautious 3-5-2 system and reinforce the attack.

"I would use a three-man attack only in conditions of dire emergency," he said flatly.

Such statements bewilder most Brazilians who are reared in the

belief that their team must not only win but must also reflect the artistic qualities held dear by the nation — grace, flamboyance and daring.

But they would no doubt be placated by the return of the cup to Rio for the first time since 1970 when Pele and his outrageously gifted team set standards that have yet to be matched.

Maradona has justifiably taken over the "world's greatest player" mantle though at nearly 30 he is probably past his peak.

And his ability to inspire his less talented teammates to the heights needed to beat the likes of Brazil must now be in question.

"All the Argentine team deserves special respect, not just Maradona," said Lazaroni.

However, Dunga is likely to be given the job of ensuring that when the stocky Argentine captain — never averse to playing for free-kicks — starts falling he does so well outside the penalty area.

Argentina have also been plagued by injury problems with understudy keeper Sergio Goycochea, brought in for Nery Pumpido who broke a leg, looking uneasy, particularly with crosses.

Both Maradona and Jorge Buruchaga, probably the side's second most important player, are suffering nagging injuries though they are sure to play.

Baggio gets high marks

ROME (R) — Italian Roberto Baggio's glorious individual goal against Czechoslovakia was the best of the World Cup, according to former Brazilian international Pele.

Pele, widely considered the best player of all time, said: "Baggio's goal was the most beautiful of the World Cup."

His opinion, shared by millions of soccer watchers, was echoed by Brazilian manager Sebastiao Lazaroni who said: "What a goal Baggio's was the finest goal seen in the World Cup so far."

Baggio, the world's costliest player, was widely expected to spend most of the World Cup on the substitutes' bench.

But he sealed his place in the side with the second goal in Italy's 2-0 victory Wednesday when he beat three defenders before shooting calmly into the net.

The World Cup has made fabulously rich Fiat boss Gianni Agnelli a little happier already about the \$13 million he shelled out for striker Baggio.

Agnelli, Italy's top industrialist, owns Turin club Juventus, who paid the world's highest transfer fee to buy Baggio from Fiorentina shortly before the World Cup.

Normally a man of few public words, Agnelli told the newspaper La Repubblica: "Baggio cost us a lot, as you know well. Now we must see how much he is worth as well as knowing how much he cost. The match with Czechoslovakia is a first, positive response to this question."

Until Italy's 2-0 victory over Czechoslovakia Wednesday night Baggio looked like being a very expensive luxury for the national team. He seemed destined to stay on the bench for most of the World Cup.

But a brilliant individual goal, Italy's second, seems to have sealed his place in the side.

Agnelli has more than one cause for celebration. His other recent acquisition, Salvatore Schillaci, is also a national hero after scoring both against Czechoslovakia and Austria.

Michel stars, Uruguay sets hearts fluttering in Group E

UDINE (R) — Group E produced the World Cup's leading first round goalscorer in Spanish midfielder Michel and it was the two solid European teams — Spain and Belgium — who prevailed over South American and Asian opposition.

That outcome was predictable but the South Americans, Uruguay, proved to be the jokers in the pack with a topsy-turvy series of matches.

They threatened at the outset to cause problems, outplaying Spain in their opening match. But in the end Uruguay avoided elimination only through an injury time goal against South Korea.

"We carry the weight of a rich past on our shoulders," explained Uruguayan manager Oscar Tabarez, whose country won the first World Cup in 1930 and again in 1950.

"When you talk of Uruguay, you remember the two World Cups we won and consider us

among the favourites. In reality, we have problems to solve and we're trying to build up a new identity," he said.

Uruguay's immediate reward is a second round clash against hosts Italy, three times winners themselves, in the pressure cooker atmosphere of the Olympic stadium.

The Koreans had been expected to provide the stiffest opposition Asia could muster and help create what was seen as the most closely balanced opening round group.

But, physically and technically not able to match the Europeans and South Americans, the Koreans lost all their matches fairly tamely.

"We tried to do everything we could but we need experience," said manager Lee Hoe-Talk. "It would help greatly if some of our players could get experience of playing in some of the more developed countries."

Belgium, the group's seeded team, started with a comfortable 2-0 win over South Korea and tightened their grip on the group with a 3-1 defeat of Uruguay.

But Spain, after a nervous start in which they were let off the hook by Uruguay and escaped with a goalless draw, then began to draw out some of the skills of a richly talented squad.

Above all, it was Michel — real name Jose Miguel Gonzalez Martin Del Campo — who turned the tables. A brilliant hat-trick of individual goals against South Korea, and a penalty conversion against Belgium, almost single-handedly left Spain as group winners.

Defender Alberto Gorritz secured the 2-1 victory over Belgium after Patrick Vervoort had equalised Michel's opener, but it was the imposing figure of goalkeeper Andoni Zubizarreta who seemed to be Spain's real guardian.

Abu Samra wins Hayyat National Rally

By Nur Sati
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Hayyat National Rally came to an end with Marouf Abu Samra, driving a Deliatu Charade, winning first place closely followed by Issa Halabi with a Nissan 240 RS.

There was neck to neck competition between Halabi and Marouf in the special stages number 11, 12 and 13 with Marouf taking the lead in the 13th stage with a difference of four seconds.

"Competition against Halabi was very tough but towards the end I really pushed my car to its limit," Marouf said.

The route, which was described as short yet difficult took the drivers from the Royal Automobile Club towards south of Amman as far as Qatranah and west on the Kings Highway heading north towards the finish at the Royal Automobile Club. Spectators were spread out along the 490-kilometre route cheering the drivers by as they munched on "goodies."

The first leg of the rally ended in Alia Gateway Hotel with a total of 19 cars out of 24 starters. However, the second leg began again from the Alia Gateway Hotel with 16 starters.

The last stage competition was high between the first seven cars when Gaith Bilbeisi, driving a Toyota Celica G.T. took over position three, which was held by Hassan Tabaa, driving a Nissan 240 R.S. thus pushing the remaining drivers one notch down.

The provisional overall final results are as follows: Marouf Abu Samra in first position with a total of 52 minutes and 0.5 seconds.

Following closely was Halabi with a total of 52:04. Gaith Bilbeisi third totalling 57:12.

A group of 14 cars followed Marouf Abu Samra with a total of 1:42:23 who also finished first overall.

Little-known players star

ROME (AP) — A 38-year-old striker who came out of retirement. A midfielder thought too fat to last a whole match. A goalie who came to Italy determined to end the anonymity of his tiny nation.

Roger Milla of Cameroon, Paul Gascoigne of England and Costa Rica's Luis Conejo are among the unlikely stars of this World Cup. Little-known outside their own countries before the tournament, they have jumped into the spotlight abandoned by many star players.

Centre stage at the world's greatest sporting spectacle had been prepared for established superstars such as Diego Maradona of Argentina, Rund Gullit of the Netherlands and Ruben Sosa of Uruguay.

But as they faltered, supporting cast members stepped forward to grab a share of glory.

When the Italian strike force of Gianluca Vialli and Andrea Carnevale failed to produce goals in, came Salvatore Schillaci to score twice. While high-scoring Spanish striker Emilio Butragueno has been quiet, playmaker Michel has noticed four goals.

The tournament has featured a number of comebacks, including that of Belgian Enzo Scifo. A starter at the 1986 World Cup, he was dropped from the team for lackluster play and returned just in time to anchor Belgium at this year's world championship.

But the most remarkable comeback player has been Milla, who lost interest in top-level soccer after the death of his mother and was playing for a small team on the Indian Ocean island of La Reunion.

Unexpectedly called back to

ward to grab a share of glory.

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ANC not wedded to socialism — Mandela

NEW YORK (R) — Nelson Mandela, triggering a wave of adulation through New York that some are calling "Mandela mania," attempted in a series of interviews Thursday to allay fears that if his movement triumphed it would move to nationalise South Africa's wealth.

But he also sparked some controversy as he repeatedly and in powerful language refused to disown three world leaders often at odds with the United States — the PLO's Yasser Arafat, Cuba's Fidel Castro and Libya's Muammar Qadhafi, saying they had aided his cause.

Meanwhile, Harlem, the black capital of America, gave him its heart Thursday night and Yankee Stadium — where baseball is often a lost cause — suddenly had a winner.

Mandela gave rousing speeches to more than 50,000 New Yorkers crammed into the famed stadium and at least 100,000 more who crowded the main street of Harlem to cheer lustily and weep

openly on the spot where black heroes have traditionally voiced their dreams.

The South African black leader left Yankee Stadium to the cheers of thousands wearing a Yankee jacket and cap, saying, "I know who I am. I am a Yankee." The stadium houses the team with the worst record in baseball.

In a free-wheeling television interview, attended by a wildly enthusiastic audience of 1,000, Mandela was asked if he would impose a Marxist or Socialist government and said, "I don't care if the cat is black or white — as long as it catches mice."

In an interview with the New York Times, he said South Africa's African National Congress (ANC) was not wedded to Socialism and supported state participation in the economy only to the extent it was needed to redress gross disparities in wealth between whites and blacks.

Mandela is expected to further discuss his vision of a South African future in a speech to the

United Nations Friday and in a news conference there.

Not even the Empire State Building was immune to the "Mandela mania" sweeping New York. It was lit up Thursday night in the gold, green and black colours of the African National Congress of which Mandela is deputy president.

Harlem called itself the Soweto of America for the night as people grabbed every available inch of space on 125th Street at Seventh Avenue to hear him declare that apartheid was doomed.

Mandela, 71, showed charm and conviction in his television interview. He refused to disown Arafat, Qadhafi and Castro.

"One of the mistakes political analysts make is to think their enemies should be our enemies. Our attitude toward any country is their attitude toward our struggle."

"Qadhafi, Castro and Arafat support our struggle to the hilt... we identify with the PLO because they are fighting for the right of

self-determination just like we are."

Amid hisses, American Jewish Congress leader Henry Siegman, who had met in Geneva with Mandela to discuss his support of Arafat, accused the black leader of "amoralism" in his support of the three. Mandela retorted, "we have no time to look into the internal affairs of other countries."

The close questioning of Mandela's friendship for Arafat reflected the tensions of black-Jewish relations in the United States. Mandela went to great lengths to praise Jewish support for his cause, the high number of Jews in his organisation and his belief that Israel has a right to exist within secure borders.

The televised interview ended with an eight-year-old boy saying if Mandela needed help all he had to do was send a postcard and the youth would "even, even send money." Mandela called him up to the stage for an embrace.

Soviets pull nuclear arms out of trouble spots

BRUSSELS (R) — The Soviet Union is withdrawing some nuclear weapons from the Baltic republics, Transcaucasia and Eastern Europe because of concern over internal unrest and the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, NATO sources said Friday.

Security has been sharply increased at all Soviet bases with nuclear weapons, they added, citing U.S. and West German intelligence reports.

"They are worried that these weapons might fall into the wrong hands and they want to be very sure that it doesn't happen," said one source, who asked not to be identified.

Moscow had moved the weapons, thought to be short-range missiles and some nuclear artillery shells, back to the Russian Republic — close to central control.

"We're not sure exactly how many they've moved, but it's not a huge amount," said another source. "It doesn't seem to involve strategic nuclear weapons, which tend to be based elsewhere."

The Baltic republics have been the scene of nationalist unrest and independence bids by Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia while fighting between ethnic groups in Transcaucasia flared earlier this year.

The presence of Soviet troops and nuclear weapons on the soil of the once-reliable Warsaw Pact allies in Eastern Europe has become deeply unpopular since last year's revolutions.

"It seems to us that these precautions are very sensible," said one NATO diplomat.

"There's a lot of worry here about the possibility of the Soviet Union simply collapsing. In that chaos, there would be nuclear weapons around, and that's a pretty frightening thought."

It's very important that they do this," said Hans Binnendijk of the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). "The last thing they want is a rogue independent state with nuclear weapons."

Shevardnadze: Allies should leave Berlin

WEST BERLIN (R) — Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze proposed Friday that all troops of the World War II allies withdraw from Berlin within six months after German unification.

He was speaking at a ceremony marking the removal of the Checkpoint Charlie border post beside the Berlin Wall.

"We propose to our partners that with the establishment of a joint German parliament and government, the allied regime be abolished and the troops of the four allied powers leave the greater Berlin region within a six-month period," he said.

The Soviet Union, the United States, Britain and France have retained ultimate sovereignty and military garrisons in Berlin since the defeat of Hitler's Third Reich in 1945.

The city's allied status has increasingly become an anomaly since East Germany opened the Berlin Wall last November, ending 40 years of cold war.

Shevardnadze said the Soviet Union would submit a document to settle all aspects of a future unified Germany's status at a "two-plus-four" foreign ministers' meeting of the World War II allies and East and West Germany Friday.

The three Western allies have some 12,000 troops stationed in their sectors of West Berlin and the Soviet Union has more than 360,000 troops deployed in East Germany and East Berlin.

Shevardnadze's proposal could mean the departure of allied troops by next June, since West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl has proposed pan-German elections on Dec. 9, followed by the immediate accession of East Germany to Bonn's Federal Republic.

The Soviet foreign minister proposed that when allied troops withdrew, all other aspects of the city's special status should disappear.

These include allied air control, a ban on all German military forces in the city — frequently violated by East Germany's former Communist regime — and the right of the allies to ban political demonstrations.

"I wish Berlin peace, calm and well-being. May it become one of the biggest centres of the new system of security and stability in Europe and a connecting bridge between East and West in Europe," Shevardnadze said.

The Soviet Union is isolated in the "two-plus-four" talks in its opposition to a unified Germany becoming a full member of NATO.

Divers discover Ibsen's shipwreck

OSLO (AP) — Divers have discovered the sunken schooner piloted by Henrik Ibsen's grandfather that inspired the playwright to use maritime themes in his dramas. Ibsen's grandfather, also named Henrik, was the captain and owner of the ship when it sank on its way back to Norway from England in 1797. All 16 people aboard drowned.

The national news agency NTB reported Thursday that diver Kenneth Odegard located the three-masted ship in 37 metres of water off Grimstad, a southern town where Ibsen did his first serious writing. The agency said a bell engraved with the ship's name, Charitas, was brought up several months ago after a year's search.

"The find will have a place in world history because of its clear influence in the captain's grandson," said an Ibsen expert, Bjørn Hemmer, in a ceremony at Grimstad's Ibsen Museum.

The playwright heard about the shipwreck from his grandmother. In his works, Ibsen described the sea as compelling and threatening, and used shipwrecks as symbols of human defeat and destiny.

Arms sales to Third World in sharp decline, report says

WASHINGTON (AP) — The value of arms sales by major suppliers such as the United States and Soviet Union to Third World clients has dropped more than 50 per cent in recent years, according to a study by the Congressional Research Service.

The total value of arms agreements with the Third World was \$29.3 billion in 1989, down from \$61.4 billion in the peak year 1982, said the study by the congressional agency.

Saudi Arabia and Iraq have been, by a wide margin, the top Third World arms buyers from 1982 to 1989, with Saudi Arabia accounting for 14.1 per cent, respectively, of the weapons transfers.

The study also indicated a massive decline in arms sales to the Third World from \$3.2 billion in 1982 to \$300 million last year, the report said. West Germany, on the other hand, increased its sales from \$83 million in 1982 to nearly \$1.3 billion in 1989.

The report attributed the overall decline to two factors:

Third World clients are still absorbing massive arms deliveries they ordered in the 1970s and 1980s, and aren't buying expensive new weapons. Their purch-

ases in recent years have included a greater proportion of spare parts and ammunition — less costly than aircraft, tanks or ships.

Secondly, many Third World countries are burdened by heavy debt and unwilling or unable to buy as many weapons as they did. Even oil-rich nations have cut back on some arms buys as world oil prices have dropped.

Also, the end of the eight-year Iran-Iraq war in 1988 has reduced orders from the two combatants which accounted in large measure for the massive increase in arms sales in the early and mid-1980s, the study found.

The United States accounted for 26 per cent of the arms agreements with the Third World, but its total sales agreements fell from \$9.3 billion in 1982 to \$7.7 billion last year.

The U.S. figures only include government-to-government agreements, excluding commercial sales for which the data are incomplete, the report said. But this exclusion does not affect the U.S. ranking among other arms suppliers, it added.

The value of commercial arms deliveries in fiscal year 1989 fell

to \$1.61 billion from \$3.3 billion the previous year, according to State Department figures.

The value of Soviet arms agreements, which accounted for 38.4 per cent of the weapons transfers to the Third World, fell from \$14.7 billion in 1982 to \$11.2 billion in 1989.

In addition to a drop in demand, the decline in Soviet sales could also reflect a Kremlin decision to cut back its support for Third World clients who cannot pay in hard cash.

Still, in 1989 the Soviets were the major supplier to eight of the 10 top Third World arms recipients, the study said. They were: Afghanistan, Angola, Vietnam, Syria, Iraq, Libya, Cuba and India.

Iran's major supplier was China; Saudi Arabia's was the United Kingdom.

Arms agreements with Afghanistan more than tripled from 1982 to 1989, to \$8.6 billion. Angola and Vietnam increased their arms purchase agreements 37 per cent and 12 per cent, respectively, in the same period.

Syria declined 56.4 per cent, Iraq 43.4 per cent, and Libya 30.3 per cent, the report said.

Cambodia calls for early ceasefire

BANGKOK (R) — Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen has urged the start of a ceasefire as soon as possible amid reports of more fighting between government troops and guerrillas.

Hun Sen, in a speech broadcast on official radio Thursday, said the Khmer Rouge-led guerrilla alliance fighting his Vietnam-backed government would try to gain control of more territory before a ceasefire came into effect.

"We want to implement the ceasefire and the suspension of military aid as soon as possible, but the other Cambodian factions, particularly the Khmer Rouge, want to prolong the war," he said.

A transcript of the speech was seen in Bangkok Friday.

Hun Sen and Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the alliance's nominal head, agreed in Tokyo on June 5 that the rival armies should halt fighting when a supreme national council involving all the factions was set up by the end of July.

The Baltic republics have been the scene of nationalist unrest and independence bids by Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia while fighting between ethnic groups in Transcaucasia flared earlier this year.

The presence of Soviet troops and nuclear weapons on the soil of the once-reliable Warsaw Pact allies in Eastern Europe has become deeply unpopular since last year's revolutions.

"It seems to us that these precautions are very sensible," said one NATO diplomat.

"There's a lot of worry here about the possibility of the Soviet Union simply collapsing. In that chaos, there would be nuclear weapons around, and that's a pretty frightening thought."

It's very important that they do this," said Hans Binnendijk of the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). "The last thing they want is a rogue independent state with nuclear weapons."

Tamil Tigers massacre 62 Muslims in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO (R) — Tamil separatist guerrillas hacked to death 62 Muslims in Sri Lanka's eastern province on Friday, accusing them of being government informants, security sources said.

They said fighters of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) armed with guns and knives, stormed the Muslim village of Nintavur in Eastern Amparai district and hacked and chopped their victims.

The sources said the rebels had used knives instead of guns fearing shots would alert the security forces close by.

The attacks had accused residents of the coastal village of giving information to advancing troops earlier in the week about the location of Tiger hideouts.

The alleged massacre took place less than 24 hours after Deputy Defence Minister Ranjan Wijeratne said security forces had liberated the whole of eastern province from the Tigers after 11 days of fierce fighting.

The Tigers had retreated to the jungles as columns of troops advanced on the main towns in the Amparai, Batticaloa and Trincomalee districts.

The residents in the area said the Tigers, fighting for an independent state for Sri Lanka's Tamil minority, had regrouped in the outskirts of the towns.

The Tigers launched attacks on June 11 on police stations and army camps in the northeast.

They overran 30 police stations, abducted 800 policemen and seized arms and ammunition.

The security forces launched a counter-offensive and recaptured the eastern province from the Tigers. They were moving to clear the rebels from the northern sector, Wijeratne told reporters Thursday.

Bangladesh doctors strike paralyses health services

DHAKA (R) — Twelve thousand doctors were out on strike Wednesday throughout Bangladesh because of "defamatory" remarks. The Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) said emergency services would remain open during the eight-hour stoppage, but threatened to shut them down unless doctors were treated properly. "This is to register our protest at frequent defamatory statements made about the country's physicians who sometimes also face harassment," a BMA statement said. BMA was apparently referring to an incident on June 2 when a doctor at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital slapped a nurse for alleged neglect of duty. Angry nurses assaulted a physician and doctors walked out, halting hospital services for two days. Hundreds of patients were forced to leave the hospital or remain in their beds uncared for. Dhaka residents flooded newspapers with protest letters, saying the doctors' action was inhuman and whimsical.

Canada's Meech Lake agreement in trouble

MONTREAL (AP) — A constitutional agreement aimed at keeping French-speaking Quebec in the Canadian federation is on the brink of death, blocked in two provinces as the deadline for passage approached.

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney Thursday flew to St. John's, Newfoundland, one of the holdouts, in an effort to save the agreement, which must be ratified by all 10 provinces by midnight Saturday or expire. He warned that sinking the accord could prompt another referendum in Quebec — this time by the separatists.

Troubles loomed too in Winnipeg, Manitoba, where a legislator has managed to block debate for a week on the agreement.

Eight of the provinces favour the Meech Lake Accord, as it is called, and Mulroney is one of the most ardent supporters of the agreement.

In a restrained but tough address, Mulroney confronted Newfoundland's 52-seat legislature with the possibility of constitutional paralysis, economic problems and increased support for the separatist cause.

"On that night, when you're sitting there with your family and your children, one thought is going to go through your mind: Do you mean to tell me that we could have avoided all of this for Meech Lake?" Mulroney said.

"If that night were ever to come, the terms of Meech Lake are going to look very, very reasonable indeed to every member of this house of assembly and every house of assembly across Canada."

One hour after Mulroney concluded his address, a bomb threat forced a 45-minute evacuation of the legislature.

The five-point agreement would designate Quebec a "distinct society," something the supreme court would be obliged to consider when looking at specific laws challenged under the constitution.

The Meech Lake agreement, first approved by the prime minister and the premiers of the provinces in 1987, is aimed at winning Quebec's signature on Canada's 1982 constitution. At that time, the ministers set a three-year deadline for approval by the parliament and legislatures.

In the interim, governments

changed in three of the provinces — Manitoba, Newfoundland, and New Brunswick — and the premiers reneged on the signatures of their predecessors.

In early June, Mulroney called the premiers to Ottawa where they spent a week in intense private meetings. They agreed to pass the original accord as it is. New Brunswick passed it last week.

Newfoundland Premier Clyde Wells put the agreement up for a vote in his legislature, where it is still being debated.

The biggest challenge has come from Manitoba. Legislator Elijah Harper, who as a Cree is the only Indian in the provincial legislature, has said he will kill Meech Lake because it does not take native rights into consideration.

Many of the Indians and Inuit leaders of Canada believe their societies are as distinct as Quebec's, and they also want to be recognised in the constitution.

Manitoba law requires public hearings before a vote on constitutional amendments, and procedural delays introduced by Harper have pushed debate back so far that it may be impossible to pass the measure before the deadline.

For many Quebecois in Montreal, Canada's second-largest city, the arguments have worn thin and the endless debate over a document thought signed and sealed in 1987 has led to widespread cynicism and a rise in nationalist feelings.

A poll published Thursday in the French-language newspaper La Presse indicated that 57 per cent of Quebecois favour sovereignty, up slightly from 56 per cent in March.

But, unlike a decade ago when a referendum was held by the separatist Parti Quebecois to determine the future of the province, passion is missing.

"I think people have accepted that it (Meech Lake) won't pass with a shrug," said Robert Gagnon, a computer systems specialist for a Montreal insurance company.

An exception to that feeling came from cabbie Roger Solari, asked about independence for Quebec, he responded with a vigorous "ah, oui." Slapping the steering wheel for emphasis. "They don't want us. We're better off independent."

Berlin's Checkpoint Charlie removed

WEST BERLIN (R) — Building cranes removed the Checkpoint Charlie border post, a symbol of the cold war, from its site near the Berlin Wall Friday in a ceremony attended by foreign ministers of the four World War II allies.

As a military brass band played march music, the prefabricated hut in the middle of Friedrichstrasse was lifted clean off the ground to be carried away on a flat-back truck.

The border observation post was erected after East Germany built the Berlin Wall in 1961 to stop a flood of refugees fleeing to the West.

Checkpoint Charlie, where U.S. and Soviet tanks faced each other at the height of the cold war and Westerners watched in horror as East Germans were shot in attempts to flee to freedom, became a casualty of democratic revolution in Eastern Europe.

"We should not forget the reasons for which Checkpoint Charlie stood here for so many years. But no one can be sorry that it is going," British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said in a speech. "At long last, we are bringing Charlie in from the cold."


French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas said Charlie's demise was a "celebration of liberty" and a tribute to East-West reconciliation and East Germans' "quiet revolution" against Communist dictatorship last year.

The sign trumpeting "allied checkpoint" was carried away by three soldiers representing the three Western allies — the United States, Britain and France — and the duty guard was discharged for the last time.

The prefabricated hut is to be put in a museum.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker said the ceremony was a symbolic burial of the conflict that created the infamous crossing point at the Berlin Wall.

"In its (the checkpoint's) place, together we pledge to build a bridge between East and West, a bridge not of cement and steel but of peace and freedom," Baker said.



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Sofa maker helps Danish mink farmers

VEJEN, Denmark (R) — Danish mink farmers have a new friend, Jutland furniture maker Verner Thams, who gets customers to sit on mink even if they don't wear it. Thams is aiming at the Asian market for his idea, a mink-upholstered sofa and two armchairs costing just 675,000 crowns (\$105,000). "I've sold seven sets in Japan since November and I hope to sell 10 to 20 a year there," Thams said Wednesday. He has also had inquiries from Thailand and the Middle East. It takes about 100 mink skins to cover a sofa, so Thams' salesmen need to work hard to make a dent in the several million skins stockpiled by Danish mink farmers until prices recover from present record lows.

Japan to launch music festival

TOKYO (AP) — More than 700 performers, conductors and composers from 23 nations will gather in a northern Japan park next week to launch what Japan hopes will become a major annual music festival. Conductors Leonard Bernstein and Michael Tilson Thomas are artistic directors of the New Pacific Music Festival, a three-week concert, study and discussion session inspired by festivals at Tanglewood in the United States and Schleswig-Holstein in West Germany. The festival opens next Tuesday on an outdoor stage set up in a natural amphitheatre to accommodate an audience of 5,000 near Sapporo, capital of the northern main island of Hokkaido. Opening festivities feature Sanjui Nori, a drum and dance troupe from South Korea, and brass players from the London Symphony Orchestra. The concerts that follow will feature the London symphony, the Sapporo Symphony and the Pacific Music Festival Orchestra. The festival orchestra is made up of 138 young instrumentalists who also will be the students of Bernstein, Thomas and 33 other conductors, composers and instrumentalists in the festival's master classes.

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